A NEW GENIUS WHO DOES NOT SEE

Maurice Dumesnil

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ALEC TEMPLETON

ETUDE - July 1939 V. LVII No. 7

A New Genius Who Does Not See

By the French Pianist and Conductor

MAURICE DUMESNIL

SOME TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO near Cardiff, South Wales, a tiny boy, hardly two years of age, climbed up on the bench of an upright piano in the sitting room of a farm house. His little sister had just concluded her daily practice and gone to other duties. The child put his hands on the keyboard and his diminutive fingers crawled awkwardly, trying to imitate the notes of a nearby church bell. He was Alec Templeton, the son of a Scottish gentleman farmer who owned important interests in the fertile Welsh agricultural land.

Soon the little boy's efforts began to assert themselves in a most decisive manner. Frequently, when his sister practiced on some Clementi or Dussek sonatina, he would run up to her and exclaim, "You played a wrong note. I cannot bear to hear wrong notes!" And, if this guilt was denied, Alec would explore into the faulty chord and invariably discover the mistake. "Here it is," he would say, striking reneatedly on the note that ought to have been.

Astonishing Precocity

AT THE AGE OF FOUR he felt the urge to give his efforts a more permanent form, and, leaving aside the improvisation of embryonic sequences, he set out to build up a real piece which he still remembers as his "first known composition." But little Alec's imagination ran far ahead of his physical possibilities. It is reported that young Mozart once played with the tip of his nose one note that the limited stretch of his hand could not reach (*si non è vero, è ben trovato*—if not true, it is well invented). Alec's trouble was similar, but in the direction of chord playing. Since his hands were not able to span more than a few notes, he tried to perform the larger chords with his elbows, not realizing that he was paving the way for the "cluster" system advocated later by certain contemporaneous adepts of musical "dadaism." However, and regardless of physical handicaps, the piece got under way and finally was completed. It turned out to be a lullaby, and his mother used it to sing him to sleep.

The following year Alec started directing a choir of his playmates; and, when music was needed for some particular occasion, he composed it and taught it to them part by part. His hand had grown and already he proved to be a promising piano student. For several years he went on, and as his technic developed he used it for the purpose of expressing the world of melodies and harmonies that were constantly going through his brain. During that period and while still on the farm, he composed a great deal. But none of these compositions was committed to paper. Alec could not write music. He had been deprived of sight from birth. And he did not know it yet. Surrounded by the devoted care of his parents, he thought that his condition was normal and that he was like everyone else in the world. Only later did he learn the truth, when it became necessary for him to study the Braille system without which his general education would have remained incomplete.

Nature Makes Amends

MEDICAL SCIENCE TEACHES us that when one of our senses fails nature compensates for this loss by stimulating the others in some mysterious fashion. Thus can be explained the phenomenal sharpening of the other major sense, that of hearing, in the Templeton of to-day. But let us return to the young British student years and to the time when his father, realizing that he must answer the call of genius, sold his farming interests and moved to the great city of London. There Alec sought and obtained introduction to the leading English musicians who unanimously predicted for him a brilliant future. He was twelve years of age, and the time for intensive study had come. The Royal Academy of Music opened its doors to him, and he studied piano, harmony, counterpoint, fugue and composition under the best masters. At the same time his tremendous desire for becoming acquainted with the musical literature found satisfaction through hundreds of records which were lent to him; for in this way he could hear the great symphonic repertoire, explore the wealthy fields of chamber music, and familiarize himself with lieder as well as opera.

Great honors were soon bestowed upon Alec Templeton. The British Broadcasting Company, having offered a prize for composition, he took part in the contest and won it. This meant, of course, much publicity and the opportunity to hear the crowned work performed over the radio. Subsequently Alec obtained his L.R.A.M., or performer's diploma. By that time he had become a full-fledged virtuoso; and, when the *London Daily Express* announced another contest, he decided to enroll and try his luck once more. It was going to be a piano competition this time, and eight thousand entrants had flocked from all parts of the British Isles. Nevertheless, Alec was again successful. It was something of a consecration, indeed, and at once he became in demand on part of the concert managers, music clubs and orchestras. During several seasons he toured all over England, appearing as soloist with the Hallé Concerts in Manchester, the Scottish Orchestra in Edinburgh and Glasgow, the Leeds Festival, apart from London where he played under Sir Henry Wood, Landon Ronald, Sir Thomas Beecham, and others.

A Skillful Portraitist

SUCH ACHIEVEMENTS would have been considered by many as final, and it would have been quite normal to follow in their wake and to continue a virtuoso career which had started so auspiciously. However, Alec Templeton began to feel another strong urge within himself. Among friends, in intimate gatherings, he often sat at the piano and gave imitations of well known composers or concert artists, which made the audience literally roar and ask for more. The portraiture was so striking that even when no name was announced the listeners always guessed the correct one. Sometimes he would "pick" on an Englis's mannerism; and, then, long before Bushe, everyone would call the name, Alec would turn and say, "Yes, it is he, but please keep this confidential and strictly between ourselves; because, you know, I love and respect him so much."

At that time, musical satire was almost inexistent. Some was being done in France, and most cleverly, by Bétove, an old friend and schoolmate of mine at the Paris Conservatoire, whose real name is Michel Maurice Lévy, and who is also a serious musician and the composer of an opera performed at the Opera Comique in 1926. Many travelling Americans have heard Bétove in continental music halls, where he has achieved a lasting fame.

That was also the period when American jazz had invaded Europe in an unbelievable fashion. I may surprise many by quoting the fact that in Paris some imported American popular crooners and bands were receiving fees far in excess of those commanded by the world's greatest singers, instrumentalists and symphony orchestras. It was the age of inflation and easy life, of entertainment and frivolity.

The Dawn of a Career

AN UNUSUAL OPPORTUNITY presented itself to Alec Templeton and he wisely seized it. Jack Hylton offered him an engagement. The Hylton band was then at the top of its glory. It had taken Paris by storm, as well as other European capitals. The contract was financially attractive; and it was stipulated that Alec, apart from his work with the orchestra, would appear as entertainer, a feature through which he soon became the real star of the company. When in 1935 Jack Hylton brought his band to the United States, Alec Templeton came with them; and it was not long until his work drew such attention that he did not renew his contract when it expired, but, instead, he came back to this country as an individual soloist. His position is now well established on the concert stage and over the air, and he has achieved the unusual feat of satisfying the sophisticated listener and the layman alike. He has triumphed over the handicap of his native anopsia by sheer force of character and never relying in the least upon it to win the sympathy of his audience. He is a true humorist and satirist in the full equipment of a splendid musician, and he has pushed still farther the art of imitation and impersonation carried out in France by the pioneer Bétove. He passes with equal ease from Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata" to the interpretation of a Landon Ronald song. *The music goes round and round*, from Debussy's *Poissons d'or* to the caricature of a Wagnerian opera.

Humor in music is a rare and almost indescribable art. It would be difficult to reduce it to words: it simply has to be heard. For this reason, to spend an afternoon with Alec Templeton is a great treat. Hardly has he greeted his visitor and mutual understanding been established, till he goes to the piano and starts illustrating the different topics and characters as they come up in the conversation. He plays a few measures from a Mozart sonata, and he

chuckles gleefully as he proceeds to show us how Grieg, Wagner, Ravel or Debussy would have treated it. Then he plays us Bach Fugue, and suddenly it turns to a typical Rachmaninoff melody, simply because he has brought out prominently an inside part. And, quoting at random, he will take a few measures here and there—let us say, from the *Volga Boat Song*, Debussy's *Reverie*, Chopin's *Ballade in A-flat*, and *Tea for Two*; and, from such astonishingly diversified material, he will continue running through delectably for his listeners through contrapuntal intricacies, weaving the themes together in unobtrusive fashion and never losing the air all times while displaying his genius for mimicry with occasionally an ironic bite added to his delicate wit.

Alec Templeton also uses his voice, when he turns to "the shortest Wagnerian opera." The guttural *Ich's* and *Ach's* of a strangling German tenor, the shrill high notes of the famous soprano, the grunting shouts of the basso, all are there; and the Wagnerian orchestra is there too, but reduced with marvelous insight into some of the harmonic and instrumental mannerisms peculiar to the master.

Lighter music fellows, and an ensemble number from a Gilbert and Sullivan operetta is revealed with devastating penetration. It is probably in the Wagner number since the pitch wobbles, the phrasing is affected, and the caricature is so skillfully drawn that one cannot resist bursting into laughter.

A Debussy Disciple

Alec Templeton's musical God, however, is Claude Debussy. He is completely saturated with the esthetics of the French master. He is familiar with all his works and has arranged, by ear, the *Afternoon of a Faun*" into a piano transcription which reproduces most faithfully the elusive orchestration of the original.

"Didn't Debussy want the running passages played like this—with much pedal and shimmering color?—Not like that, mechanical and dry?" he queries as he plays excerpts from the well known *Reflets dans l'eau* and *Poissons d'or*.

I was astonished by his uncommon comprehension of the Debussy style, by the flexible delivery of the left hand in the delicate *rubato* which never broke the golden flow of the music. And astonishment grew further by having certain of the pieces which he continued improvising *à la Debussy*," from the early manner to the greater and greater period. The same keen gift of observation was here displayed, as had been exemplified before on entirely different lines. Soon Ravel was called upon and his peculiar mixture of tonal and modernistic treble writing were brought to the fore. It was, really, Debussy and Ravel at their best.

It is interesting to know how Alec Templeton assimilates his large repertoire of classical and popular music. He does it mostly by ear and sometimes verifies the text with the help of the Braille edition. He listens to phonograph records and his keen ear indentifies almost immediately the complexities of the harmony and the play of the inner voices. It was no small wonder when I sat at the piano and played for him Debussy's *Le Petit Nègre* and Evangeline Lehman's *Southland Frolic*. Without my having played the pieces Twice I repeated these compositions; then he took my place, and after a few additional minutes of verification here and there, they were memorized.

A Prolific Creator

The Templeton list of compositions is already long and varied. It includes piano solos, songs and instrumental numbers. He is also the author of some remarkable pianistic exercises in which the accustomed dryness is substituted by sequences of refined and personal harmonies, notwithstanding the fact that the texture proper is of great value for the development of stretch and finger independence.

We sat on the sofa and started discussing the musical tendencies of to-day. Alec Templeton brings into his conversation the same spirited action and prolific versatility that he displays at the keyboard. He is always eager, vivacious, convincing; and one feels the constant flow of imagination that springs from his untiring brain.

"The so-called ultramodern composers," he says, "are really doing nothing new; in fact, they are only repeating what primitive musicians did hundreds of years ago. This applies to both classical and popular music. There has been so much talk about polytonality, and about atonality, that I do not know and I cannot see any reason why certain composers, who invent a plain tune, feel the urge to modify it, to make it 'up to date' by adding discordant notes in order to be 'modern.' Certainly they are afraid to let their nature speak candidly and sincerely? Afraid of being judged as old-fashioned, by those who possess no melodic gift, and therefore are obliged to rely upon more commonplace and brutal elements? Afraid of not being *'à la page'*? (Templeton's French is excellent and he even knows the vernacular.) Afraid of having the snobs turn up their nose? Why —it is ridiculous—and to me a composer who prefers yielding to a passing fashion rather than to creating what his own soul would dictate, is doomed to ultimate failure, though in a certain measure he may win temporary recognition."

"I love melody," Alec continues; "music

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Music of Worth to the Moment

By VERNA ARVEY

Musicians in Hollywood are subject to make number of unexpected experiences, some amusing, some trying. For example, when Universal's new Deanna Durbin picture, "Three Smart Girls Grow Up," was in production, Charles Previn, musical director, trained an orchestra to play for a banquet sequence in a girls' school when Miss Durbin sings *The Wren*. When it came time to make the scene it was discovered that there was no actor capable of playing Previn's part, brief as it was. So Previn, for the first time in his life, donned grease paint and make-up to enact the role of conductor in the film as well as in actuality! On another occasion at another studio, Marguerite Bitter, pianist, was told to report for work on "Gunga Din." The assignment said that she would be photographed playing her instrument. But, by the time she arrived at the studio, the minds of the officials had changed and it had been decided to omit the music sequency. In order to compensate her for her journey she was given a costume and make-up and asked to be an actress in a mob scene for a day! One of the most important historical pictures of the year is Warner Brothers' "Juarez," based on episodes in Mexican history. For this picture the entire music for this film to Erich Wolfgang Korngold, who discovered, on investigating Mexican music of that historical epoch, that it was so European-ized that he had but to use his own idiom rather than to incorporate a large number of folk tunes, to make it authentic. Korngold's original score for "Juarez" is said to have set a Hollywood record: twenty-eight hundred measures of music. Doubtless it will be cut greatly before the final release of the film.

DEANNA DURBIN

The Jascha Heifetz film at Goldwyn's Studio has been retitled several times. The latest title is "Angels Making Music." In this film will appear the California Junior Symphony Association, founded by Peter Meremblum and composed of forty-five boys and girls of superior musical ability. They are all grammar and high school students aged nine to fourteen. In the film this youthful orchestra plays the overture to Rossini's "Barber of Seville" as well as the accompaniments to two operatic arias sung by nine year old Jacqueline Nash.

For Fox's historical film, based on the life and work of Alexander Graham Bell, the producers decided to have variety in the musical score, and therefore they assigned a good many of the staff arrangers to the composition of original music for it, under the direction of Louis Silvers. Arthur Bergen Plays, Claude Rains stars in a technicolor short called "Sons of Liberty," with original background music by Howard Jackson; Dr. W.G.M. Dandy Architect (formerly associate conductor of the Minneapolis Symphony), made a decided innovation when he sent copies of his musical score for the "Ice Follies of 1939" (entitled "Cinderella's Ice Carnival," and including a *March, Nocturne* and *Scherzo*) to many leading orchestral leaders in America, in the hope that they would program it. For this score, Bernice Petkere and Roger Edens supplied the musical motifs while P. A. Marquardt and Leonid Raab made the orchestration.

Who are going to have been composed by Irving Berlin for the new Sonja Henie film at Fox Studios. As is usual with Miss Henie's pictures, this one is in the form of a musical comedy-love story. Ray Bolger and Tyrone Power appear with her on the screen. It may be well to recall that ice skating is closely akin to classic ballet dancing, since all of the figures are based upon and developed from ballet steps. In legal vein at Warner Brothers Studios is the recent film starring Dick Powell and Ann Sheridan and based on a musical idea. This time the ambitious title of "Naughty but Nice" and recounts the story of a professor of music in a small college who hopes to persuade New York's leading conductor to use his serious symphonic work. He is not successful in this quest, but a publishing house accepts his compositions and puts them out as swing music. Whereupon finds himself enormously successful in an unexpected manner! Warren and Mercer supplied the songs and lyrics.

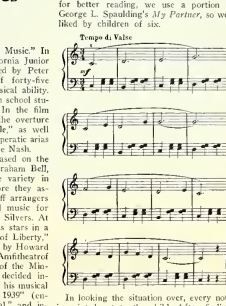
RKO Studios are making good use of the talents of Roy Webb, composer and conductor, for he has been assigned to two major films since writing the music for "Love Affair," with Irene Dunne and Charles Boyer. The new films are "Little Mother," with Ginger Rogers, and "The Flying Irishman," starring Douglas Corrigan.

How to Improve the Child's Reading Ability

By STELLA WHITSON-HOLMES

The cause of much poor reading is due to the fact that the teacher, never having analyzed her own natural ability, does not realize that she reads by position much more than by letter. If she will teach the child to read by position, as well as letter, she is teaching him to use his common sense in music; and his reasoning powers are developed just as in the study of literature and mathematics. In addition to the application of reasoning powers in this manner, the writer does one small thing that prepares the child for a splendid job of reading the moment his hands touch the keyboard, thus pushing up the quality of his finished attainment.

In illustration of this work that makes for better reading, we use a portion of George L. Spaulding's *My Partner*, so well liked by children of six.



In looking the situation over, every note is pointed out to the child. After finding that the piece starts with Middle C, I may say, "Now what do you do next?" and the child may say, "Go up to the next one." After the third measure is played, I may say, "Now you skip one up." Next the pupil tells me that we go back to Middle C, skip one up and drop one down. Then it seems well to have the child realize that we are to read the next letter. I, because if he merely feels his way over that much of a skip, he will be confused later on when the fingers do not lie directly over the notes to be played. The next he recognizes as "Strike the same note over and tie it." The next he may be able to tell me himself and may say, "Drop one down, play one up, skip one down, another one down, another one up, and skip one down to C again."

Now we have reached the place where he again reads a note, the letter G. From there he thinks in terms of "Drop one down, skip one down, then play." Drop one down, skip one down, then to C and tie."

If you have followed closely you will see that the child has reasoned his way through (and reasoning is one of the powers of the mind which the music teacher must feel responsible to train) and by reading possibly six letters in all, he has been relieved much of the painful grind to which defenseless small beginners were once subjected. This does not detract from his ability to read letters, but enhances it rather, by keeping him an active participant in music long enough to become an expert.

* * *

"He who gives himself an air of importance exhibits the credentials of impotence."—Lavater.

A Genius Who Does Not See

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without melody means nothing. Melody is to music what the blood is to the human body: I truly believe that we are ready for a decided return to melodic inspiration and to general clarity and control."

At this point of the conversation Alec returns to the piano, and he plays Chamfrade's always lovely *Automne*.

"I just love this *Automne*," he comments, while the melody sings under his fingers. "It is so atmospheric, so filled with the perfume of dying leaves . . . yet forced lines—I often play it for my own pleasure."

Alec Templeton believes that Debussy has been a chief factor in this century's musical evolution. "His influence has been very definite on all composers in the past twenty-five years," he states. "The most remarkable thing about it is that, regardless of nationalities or native characteristics, everyone has fallen under the magic spell. Debussy remains the most powerful force that ever swayed the world, musically speaking. Still, he did nothing toward that end, he was the opposite of an *arriviste* (one having 'arrived') and his music is apparently more for the elect than for the man on the street. Is it not extraordinary that he finally reached the heart of that very man? Now, the *Reverie* is hummed around corners, by people who remain in the dark as to the identity of its composer."

We now discuss the French school of today. "A distinction ought to be made," he continued in subtle jest, "between those who are sincere and those, such as Milhaud and Poulenc, who, I think, write with their tongues in their cheeks."

As he speaks, Alec branches into an improvisation in Poulenc style; such as, "Poulenc, for instance, invents a short but appealing little melody. He exposes it simply, but unfortunately he gets into unwarranted complications, changes of style, heaviness of harmonization, which are no longer in keeping with the character of the original. Milhaud, also a gifted musician, is liable to write one page of very attractive, fresh and spontaneous music, as he did at the beginning of one of his sonatas for violin and piano, but he can turn the page, and everything becomes aggressive, ear rending, in short, voluntarily ugly. No doubt such writers do that with a view toward 'knocking them cold.' Why don't they remain sincere, such as Ravel was? I am at a loss to explain."

Approves American Music

ALEC TEMPLETON, of course, is an expert on jazz, and he thinks it will mark its stamp more and more upon the musical production on this side of the Atlantic. "The music of such American composers as George Gershwin, Cole Porter, Jerome Kern and Ferde Grofé," he declares, "is certainly very fine, and it will have a definite influence on music of a more serious character."

Here, and in order to emphasize the accuracy of the foregoing prediction, we must mention the name of John Alden Carpenter. The noted Chicago composer has written several compositions in which, indeed, there are unmistakable shadows of the higher type of refined jazz. Let us quote a few of his *Concertino*, for piano and orchestra; the *Diversion*, in *G minor* for piano solo; and the stunning ballet, "Skyscrapers."

In concluding, Alec Templeton turns back to classicism. "The various types of the so-called ultramodern music that I have listened to," he says, "make me more convinced than ever of the genius of the great Bach. All the harmonies which are now used, can be found in the works of Bach."

It was getting late and, although reluctantly, I had to take leave. I carried away with me a deep and lasting impression of my visit with this young man of twenty-seven, so phenomenally endowed by nature. Alec Templeton has never in his life seen the sun, nor the moon, nor the stars. He does not know what light is. The names of the colors have no meaning for him. Still, he hears, he feels, he receives countless impressions; he evaluates, he comes to conclusions, with an accuracy that is a subject for wonder. Throughout his successes he has remained unaffected, simple and gentle. He is an authentic genius: a genius in the full and exceptional French meaning of the word *génie*.

And who knows? Perhaps it was God himself, who in His infinite purpose, took away Alec Templeton's sight, "that his soul might see."

Recent Record Releases

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as a symphony conductor on radio makes him an ideal leader for recording.

Liszt's "Second Piano Concerto, in A major," is a richer and more poetic score than his "First Concerto." Heard less frequently in concert, it is undeserving of its neglect. Based almost entirely upon one theme, it has been called "The Life and Adventures of a Melody." The concerto is in one movement, although divided into sections suggestive of movements. One critic has written of this music: "Never has Liszt surfed more unreservedly in fitful orgies of flashing color. It is monstrous, formless, whimsical and fantastic, if you will—but it is also magical and gorgeous as anything in the Arabian Nights." Eugen Petri plays this work so superbly one hardly knows where to begin praise. A complete recording not to be missed! (Columbia set 362).

Felix Weingartner gives us the most vital and ingratiating performance of Beethoven's "Fidelio Overture" (Columbia disc 69545D) to date; and Arthur Fiedler presents conductorship of straightforward readings of Ravel's *Bolero* and Halvorsen's popular *March of the Boyards* (Victor set M-532). Of interest, also, both compositions represent trends in contemporary music, are the *Scherzo* from Harl McDonald's "Third Symphony" and Mennotti's *Overture* to "*Amelia Goes to the Ball*" (Victor disc 1377). Played by the Philadelphia Orchestra under the direction of Eugene Ormandy, both pieces are given brilliant performances.

Emma Boynet, protegée and assistant to the noted French pedagog, Isidor Philipp, and representative of France in the field of piano music at the New York World's Fair, has made an album presenting a cross section of French piano music from about 1880 to 1910 (Victor set M-549). All the pieces are skillfully written, but only one is of any significance—Debussy's *Les sons et les parfums tournent dans l'air du soir*. The others are *Fifth Barcarolle* of Fauré; *Nocturne en forme de valse* by Pierne; *Baigneuses au Soleil* by de Séverac; and *Bourée Fantasque* and *Idylle* by Chabrier. Ravel's recently scintillating *Alborada del Gracioso* (*The Morning Serenade of a Merry Lester*) receives its first domestic recording in its original form (as a piano solo) under the able hands of Jesus Maria Sanromá (Victor disc 4425); and Rachmaninoff's *Etude Tableau in D minor* and *Prelude in sharp minor* together with Scriabin's early works, *Etude, Op. 2, No. 1*, and *Prelude, Op. 11, No. 2*, are rendered with beauty and insight by Austin Conradi (Columbia disc 69569D). The piano student will find much of inspiration in these recordings.

It has often been said that a trio is more difficult to write than a quartet, since the task of making the trio *sound* is a harder one. It is to the complete credit of Jean Françaix, the young French composer, that his "Trio in C major" not only sounds, but is also a generous and animated work. Played by the Pasquier Trio (Columbia set X-130), it is given a competent and finegrained performance. Françaix contributes his four movements ingratiatingly by having his first and third movement played with mutes and the other two without.

Recommended: Dvořák's happy and tuneful "Sonatina in G major, Op. 100," played by Osse Renardy and Walter Robert (Columbia set X-129); Boellmann's "*Toccata* from Gigout's *Toccata* for organ, played by Edward Commette (Columbia disc 69528D); Herbert Janssen's three songs by Schubert; *Staindrhen* and of Schuman's *Die Beiden Grenadiere* (Victor disc 13379); Handel's "Sonata No. 6, in G minor," for oboe and harpsichord, played by Mitchell Miller and Yella Pessl (Victor disc 1537S); and two Victor discs, 1975 and 1976, containing several "Pieces de Caractere, in concerto" by Rameau—played by Barrère (flute), Salzedo (harp), and Britt (violoncello).

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Musicians and Kings

Certain members of the orchestra of the San Carlo Opera, Naples, is claiming damages for their discharge, have invoked a edict made by the former Bourbon kings of Naples.

In 1831 King Ferdinand decreed the musicians of the San Carlo Opera, once given their positions, could only be discharged by royal decree. Although Naples is now a province of a united Italy, the musicians maintain that the Bourbon law has never been repealed.

Next Month

THE ETUDE for August, 1939, Will Include These Interesting Features

A Brahms Master Lesson by Guy Maier

Mr. Guy Maier, who conducts the "Teachers' Round Table" in The Etude, is not merely a virtuoso pianist, but also a very able and distinguished teacher. He has studied with Rudolph Ganz in the Brahms *B minor* No. 2 rhapsody. It is one of the most brilliant and tuneful pieces of modern days—by no means easy. It will keep thousands of fingers of students of *The Etude* busy for August.

Diversions of the Masters

What did the great masters do in order to have a good time? How did they choose to amuse themselves? Mr. Jerome Bowen has come into possession of a number of letters which he has arranged in a delightful reading for the holidays of by-day-by recreation.

Buckwheat Notes

How tone of "buckwheat notes"? Thousands and thousands of music students are thinking, unfortunately, in the confusion of old signs. Mr. Buckwheat tells of the curious and interesting story of the musical symbols of reading.

Music Before the Little One Goes to School

The late Dr. Preston Ware Orem, for years music editor of the Theodore Presser Company, was a "natural born" expert upon music for children. This is the last article he left for *The Etude*, and we are confident that his fine message to our readers will be as valued both parents and teachers will find instructive.

The Music of Latin America

In an editorial, we analyze some of the musical achievements of the "Other American" with their musical delights and charms, which now contribute so much to our life in the United States. Here is one of the best articles on a beautiful profound portrait of Teresa Carreño, "Empress of the Keyboard."

JOHANNES BRAHMS

Write, "I saw it in THE ETUDE."

The Student Conductor

(Continued from Page 407)

changes as directed by his teacher. Soon these ideas transfer to the mechanics of playing his instrument. He gets the habit of actually "following the stick" from the very beginning. He learns to play softly when the baton covers little space, and soon learns that if the music is of a separated, accented style the baton stops; and in *legato* passages the baton moves smoothly with no stops. The physical expression of rhythm, speed, volume and style enables his teacher to check constantly the progress of a musicianship and to help him improve in this phase of study along with the betterment of his technical ability.

The more we act as a guest conductor at clinics and festivals, and as a judge at various contests, the more we are convinced that the fundamentals of student directing should be acquired by all, and that they are of the utmost importance to every member of our organizations and not for a chosen few.

Do You Know

That at nine years of age Handel wrote fugues and motets as exercises in composition, and played organ of the Cathedral of Halle when his master, Zachau, wished to have a vacation?

* * * * *

That Beethoven was the first composer to recognize the true value of the tympani and to write for it? The *scherzi* of the "Eroica" and "Fifth, in C minor" symphonies are interesting for study. In the *Donna Nobis* of his "Mass in D (*Missa solemnis*)" the drums are in B-flat and F, a key seemingly quite foreign to that of the movement. He departed from the tonic and dominant tuning of the drums, and in the second act of "Fidelio" they are at a diminished fifth, A-natural and E-flat. In the "Eighth Symphony" they are used in octaves.

* * * * *

Served Right

"What kind of music suits you best?" "Well, I'm not very particular. I like it either-rare or well done."—*Toronto Globe.*

Joseph's Vacation Hobby

(Just for Boys)

By Albertha Stoyer

"I WISH I had an interesting hobby to spend part of my time on this summer," said Carl.

"Why not try the same one that I'm going to follow during vacation?" suggested Joseph.

"What is it?" Carl asked.

"Well, you remember how Mother promised two years ago that if I would study piano until I had a fair foundation in music she would buy me any kind of an orchestra instrument I want, and then let me join the junior orchestra class at school. The two years are up, and because I have worked hard at my piano I am to get the orchestra instrument this fall. Now," he continued, "I don't know which instrument I would like best, so I am dividing the summer vacation into four equal periods of time. During the first period I want to learn about the stringed instruments; the second period I will study the wood wind instruments; the third period, the brass instruments; and the last period, percussion instruments. By that time I will know what each instrument is like, and then I can select one."

"Your plan sounds very sensible to me," said Carl; "and, since I am to enter that same orchestra class in the fall, I think I, too, will follow your plan. How will we start?" he added.

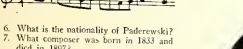
"We can get books at the library on musical instruments, and also life stories of famous musicians who have played orchestra instruments. We can visit the local music stores and look over the instruments on display; we can listen to radio programs; we can attend local band and orchestra concerts, and we can get acquainted with the orchestra directors and players living around here," Joseph added, with growing interest.

"Couldn't we send to the instrument factories for catalogs?" inquired Carl.

"Yes, let's do it to-day," answered Joseph, "and tomorrow suppose we start learning about orchestra instruments by visiting the music stores down town!"

? ? ? Who Knows ? ? ?

1. How many symphonies did Haydn write?
2. How many thirty-second notes in a double-dotted half note?
3. What is the meaning of *poco a poco cresendo?*
4. Name three operas by Puccini.
5. From what is this melody taken?



6. What is the nationality of Paderewski?
7. What composer was born in 1833 and died in 1897?
8. Who wrote the opera "Pinafore"?
9. What is meant by transposing?
10. If the submediant triad in a minor key consists of D-flat, F, A-flat, what is that minor key?

(Answers on This Page)

Answers to Who Knows

1. One hundred and four; 2. Twenty-eight; 3. Little by little dying away; 4. "Madame Butterfly," "La Tosca," "La Boheme"; 5. Schumann's *Traumerei*; 6. Polish; 7. Brahms; 8. Sir Arthur Sullivan, to a libretto by Gilbert; 9. Playing the same tones, relatively but in a key other than the one written down; 10. F minor.

The Frog's Song

By Erna Kable

IT WAS the morning after Miss Day's pupils' recital. Suddenly Lillian and Mary, dragging Effie by the hands, burst into the studio.

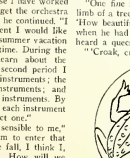
Lillian's eyes were flashing. "Oh, Miss Day," she shouted excitedly, "Effie's not going to take music lessons any more! She says it's no use, she'll never be able to play like Clerarence Lee, anyway."

Miss Day smiled. "Come, sit down. I want to tell you a story."

The three little girls sat down on the sofa, and then Miss Day began,

"One fine morning a redbird sat on the limb of a tree and trilled his morning song. 'How beautiful—how beautiful,' he thought when he had finished singing, and then he heard a queer noise.

"'Croak, croak.'



"'Dear me, what a dreadful sound,' thought the little bird. He looked up and all around.

"'Croak, croak.' There was the noise again. The redbird looked down."

On a mossy stone at the edge of the pond sat a great, green frog blinking his big, round eyes; and he said, "Croak, croak."

The redbird sighed, and then he said, "Dear me, Mr. Frog, why do you make that ugly noise?"

"Ugly noise?" the frog answered in surprise. "Why, I was singing my morning song."

The little bird was filled with disgust. He felt that something must be done, so he threw back his head and burst into his loveliest song. He trilled and he warbled to his heart's content; and then he said, "That, Mr. Frog, is a morning song. Now, you try to sing it."

The frog merely sat and blinked his eyes.

Then the redbird said, "Come, come, Mr. Frog. Why don't you try?"

The frog blinked his great round eyes again and then he answered, "Poor little redbird, don't you know that my song is as beautiful for *me* as your sing is for *you*?"

Lillian and Mary and Effie looked into each other's eyes solemnly. Then Effie smiled at Miss Day. "I think Mr. Frog was right about that."

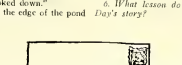
The little girls got up to go.

Effie said, "Thank you for the story, Miss Day. I'll come for my lesson in the morning."

* * * *

Questions to Think About

1. Do you think Mr. Frog was right?
2. Is that all he really meant?
3. Do you think Mr. Frog thought his song more beautiful than the redbird's?
4. Have you ever felt like Effie?
5. What do you think the redbird thought?
6. What lesson do we learn from Miss Day's story?



DEAR JUNIOR ETUDE:

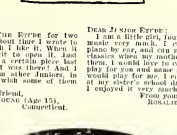
I have been taking THE ETUDE for two years, and I think it is about time I wrote to you to tell you how much I like it. When it arrives I run hardly wait to open it. Just think, I was wishing for a certain piece last month, and this month it was there! And I enjoy reading letters from other Juniors, in the Letter Box. How I wish some of them would write to me!

From your friend,
GLADYS YOUNG (Age 15),
Connecticut.

DEAR JUNIOR ETUDE:

I am a little girl, four years old and I enjoy music very much. I can sing and play the piano by ear, and can remember any hundred classics when my mother plays them. I sometimes like to come to your house and play for you and name some of the pieces you would play for me. I entertained the children at my sister's school during music week, and I enjoyed it very much.

From your friend,
ROSALIE BIASSEN (Age 4),
Pennsylvania.



Juniors of Joliette, Province of Quebec, Canada

As usual the JUNIOR ETUDE Contests are omitted during July and August. The results of the June contest will appear in November

Annie's Composer Dolls

(Just for Girls)

By Riva Henry

"I DO GET so tired of practicing my piano lessons on these hot summer days," Verna complained as she settled herself on the top step of Annie's shady veranda.

"I don't!" Annie answered without stopping her work of cutting out paper dolls. "No?" queried Verna with a surprised stare. "And are you playing with paper dolls? Why, Annie, you're too old for that!"

"I know it," Annie replied. "But these are not just ordinary paper dolls. They are composer dolls."

"They must be something new," said Verna. "Do tell me about them."

"My piano teacher often tells me little stories about the lives of the composers whose works I am studying," Annie answered, "and I always had trouble remembering them. But now," she went on, "I've started collecting pictures of these composers, and when I can get them in the correct size I cut out the head and shoulders, and paste them on the tops of old paper dolls."

"And how does that help you to remember what your teacher has told you?" Verna wanted to know.

"Well," explained Annie, "after playing with them they seem like close friends to me. I keep them between the pages of a large note book, and whenever I learn something new about a composer I jot it down on his or her page."

"Another reason why I'm fond of these home made dolls," Annie added, "is because they have made my practice hour much more interesting."

"How's that?" inquired Verna eagerly "I want to accomplish all I can in my practice hour."

"Every day before I begin practicing I gather up the dolls of all the composers in my lesson. Then as I play each piece or exercise I set its composer doll on the music rack of my piano; and really," she declared, "I am more careful about making mistakes with those picture dolls watching me."

"Not a bad idea at all," Verna admitted thoughtfully. "I think I'll try it myself!"

Composer Initial Puzzle

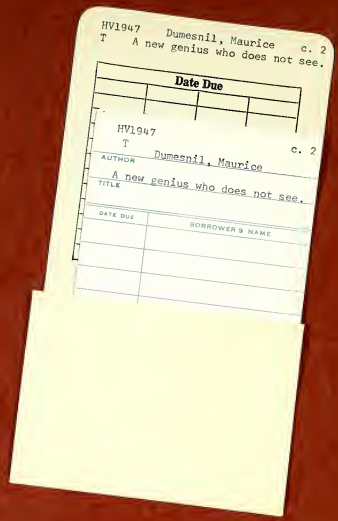
By Dorothy Baker

THE initials of the following will give the name of a composer. Answers must give all words or names.

1. A percussion instrument; 2. A French composer; 3. A wood wind instrument; 4. A brass instrument; 5. A term meaning rather slow; 6. The first name of a contemporary pianist; 7. The surname of a contemporary violinist; 8. A double-reed wood-wind instrument; 9. One of the world's greatest opera composers; 10. The composer of the "Unfinished Symphony"; 11. The colloquial name of the tympani; 12. A famous Belgian concert violinist and conductor.

Answers to Composer Initial Puzzle:

1. Tympani; 2. Saint-Saëns; 3. Clarinet; 4. Horn; 5. Andante; 6. Ignace (Paderewski); 7. Kreisler; 8. Oboe; 9. Wagner; 10. Schubert; 11. Kettle Drum; 12. Ysaÿe. Initials give TSCHAIKOWSKY.



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